ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A vehicle occupant detection system for acquiring digital images of a region containing a vehicle seat and applying processing of the images to detect the occupant status of the seat, wherein the images are photographed by infra-red light using a camera and infra-red light projection apparatus each located above and ahead of the seat location, whereby the images are unaffected by sunlight, vehicle headlights, or street lights, etc., enabling accurate status detection results to be acquired.